

analogy: an expression showing similarities between two things for the purpose of explaining or clarifying some unfamiliar or difficult idea or object by showing how the idea or object is similar to some familiar one.

While simile and analogy often overlap, the simile is generally a more artistic likening, done briefly for effect and emphasis, while analogy serves the more practical end of explaining a thought process or a line of reasoning or the abstract in terms of the concrete, and may therefore be more extended.

Examples: "A is to B as C is to *what*?"
"Hand is to palm as foot is to ____?"

Knowledge always desires increase: it is like fire, which must first be kindled by some external agent, but which will afterwards propagate itself.
– Samuel Johnson

<http://www.virtualsalt.com/rhetoric.htm#Analogy>
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analogy>